

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 6955

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS PGOV PBOR PN BR
SUBJECT: PANAMA CANAL AGREEMENT: REQUEST FOR BRAZILIAN STATEMENT OF
SUPPORT

REF: A) STATE 191921 B) STATE 192559 C) STATE 191313
D) STATE 191676

1. ON AUGUST 17, CHARGE AND EMBOFF CALLED ON AMBASSADOR JOAO HERMES ARAUJO, CHIEF OF FOREIGN MINISTRY DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAS, TO STIMULATE GOB, PER INSTRUCTIONS IN REF A, TO ISSUE A SUPPORTIVE STATEMENT ON AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE REACHED BY US AND PANAMA ON FUTURE OF THE PANAMA CANAL. ALSO PRESENT WAS COUNSELOR LUIZ CARDOSO, CHIEF OF CENTRAL AND NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION, WHO TOOK DETAILED NOTES OF THE PRESENTATION.

2. CHARGE BEGAN BY RECALLING THAT GOB HAD BEEN FOLLOWING PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH INTEREST AND HAD PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR PANAMANIAN DESIRES TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH THE US ON THE FUTURE OF THE CANAL. HE INDICATED THAT USG, CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN A MAJOR POLITICAL EFFORT TO WIN ACCEPTANCE AND RATIFICATION OF THE TREATY AT HOME, WOULD WELCOME STATEMENTS FROM OTHER INTERESTED GOVERNMENTS EXPRESSING THEIR POSITIVE VIEWS ABOUT WHAT HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NEW AGREEMENT FOR INTER-AMERICAN RELATIONS. HE ADDED THAT SHOULD GOB WISH TO EXPRESS ITSELF,
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IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF STATEMENT WERE TO BE RELEASED FROM EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON AS WELL AS IN BRASILIA. CHARGE ALSO PROVIDED ARAUJO AND CARDOSO WITH MATERIAL CONTAINED IN REFS B, C AND D.

3. ARAUJO BEGAN BY REQUESTING CLARIFICATION OF WHETHER THE ACCORD REACHED BY US AND PANAMA WAS IN FACT THE TEXT OF A NEW TREATY OR AN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE. INFORMED THAT IT WAS THE LATTER, HE ASKED WHETHER IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE EMBASSY TO PROVIDE A TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT. CHARGE SAID THAT HE WAS PROVIDING THE SUMMARY, ATTACHED TO THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO HOUSE AND SENATE OFFICERS, AND A FULLER STATE DEPARTMENT FACT SHEET AS APPROVED PERSONALLY BY AMBASSADORS BUNKER AND LINOWITZ, AS WELL AS OTHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION, SUCH AS BUNKER -LINOWITZ PRESS INTERVIEW. ARAUJO THEN SAID HE FELT IT WOULD BE SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL FOR A THIRD GOVERNMENT TO EXPRESS ITSELF ON NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN TWO OTHER GOVERNMENTS, BUT THAT THE CANAL WAS A SPECIAL CASE BECAUSE OF THE GENERAL HEMISPHERIC INTEREST IN THE QUESTION. CHARGE AGREED THAT IT WAS AN IMPORTANT AND SPECIAL CASE, RECALLED HEADS OF STATE COMMENTS IN BOGOTA, AND POINTED OUT THAT US WAS INTERESTED IN POSITIVE STATEMENTS FROM AMERICAN REPUBLIC GOVERNMENTS IF THEY FELT THE AGREEMENT MADE A CONTRIBUTION TO RELATIONS IN THE HEMISPHERE.

4. IN RESPONSE TO ARAUJO'S QUERIES, CHARGE SAID THE FORM OF THE STATEMENT WAS OF COURSE ENTIRELY UP TO GOB. ARAUJO SUGGESTED THAT GOB MIGHT EXPRESS ITS SATISFACTION WITH THE "GOOD PROGRESS" OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE FACT THAT AN UNDERSTANDING HAD BEEN REACHED. HE THEN STATED THAT HE WOULD TAKE THE MATTER UP WITH FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA AND PROVIDE A RESPONSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. AS CHARGE WAS LEAVING, ARAUJO AGAIN MENTIONED THAT HE WOULD APPRECIATE FURTHER INFORMATION.

5. COMMENT: IN MEETING WITH SENATORS HOLLINGS AND SCOTT, AUGUST 18, CONFIDENTIAL

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SILVEIRA SAID HE WAS HAPPY NEW TREATY HAD BEEN NEGOTIATED , AND THAT THE GOOD WILL OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS HAD BEEN ENGAGED. HE ALSO SAID, HOWEVER, THE CANAL WAS PRIMARILY A PROBLEM BETWEEN THE US AND PANAMA, ALLEGED THAT IT HAD BEEN MADE INTO A HEMISPHERIC ISSUE BYTHE US, AND OBSERVED THAT IT WAS NOT A SOLUTION TO ALL OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE HEMISPHERE. NEVERTHELESS, HE APPLAUDED SUCH POSITIVE IMPLICATIONS AS IT HAD FOR INTER-AMERICAN RELATIONS. CRIMMINS

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